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ABSTRACT

The role of telecommunications in higher education is discussed, along with a faculty involvement-based model for implementing a media/telecommunications service at Cameron University. Experience at the university supports the application of the Lindquist model in the implementation of telecommunications programs in higher education. Application of the model requires ownership through committee participation, evaluation procedures and the proposal process; rewards through an analysis of institutional and individual incentives and a sensitivity and responsiveness to barriers; leadership by the program administrator and committee chair; openness based in the power of the committee, the newsletter, and the evaluation process; and linkage through interaction among the committee members, proposal authors, and interinstitutional exchanges. Drawbacks of the Lindquist model include: the committee process is cumbersome and time consuming, and an environment of concensus and mutual trust is needed since the program administrator has consultive power rather than administrative power based in authority. (SW)

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# A CASE STUDY:

# FACULTY INVOLVEMENT AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

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A Case Study:
Faculty Involvement and Telecommunications

In this section, I will discuss the role of telecommunications in higher education, describe the implementation of a faculty involvement based model, and provide a preliminary assessment of the effectiveness of the model.

Telecommunications and the Future of Higher Education

When responding to the questions concerning the advantages of Talkback Television, the faculty surveyed overwhelming cited the ability to reach students regardless of location. The ability to eliminate distance barriers is indeed an important attribute of the telecommunications technologies. However, it is important not to overlook the other possible opportunities which telecommunications holds for higher education.

According to George Keller, higher education is "in the midst of a turbulent turnover" in terms of the population it serves, the environment in which it exists and in terms of the pervasive impact of the new technologies (Keller, p.9, 1985). We need only walk across our respective campuses to see dramatic changes in the students we serve. These students represent a wider range of backgrounds and abilities, interests and needs than ever before.

The adult learner has never been more important, but unlike the traditional college student, adults have many responsibilities, often juggling careers and families with education. Time is not the only consideration since learning styles, too, vary with age (Bonner 1982). And age is indeed a factor since the fastest growing segment of the student population comes from those aged sixty-five and above. The new learner is less concerned with credit as the growth of credit free programs exceeds that of credit programs. And corporate education has become the fastest growing sector of higher education.

Just as we must adapt to this changing student, we must also adapt to a changing environment. We must keep current, but find that the information

available exceeds our ability to comprehend, jeopardizing our once secure relationship between our knowledge and our theories, and the very paradigms in which we believe. The optimism and prosperity of the sixties has given way to retrenchment and accountability in the eighties. Government has new priorities, giving less to education while demanding more. A "Nation at Risk" is a nation which replaces the emphasis upon equality of opportunity with an emphasis upon standards, just at a time when we need more educated people not less (Astin, 1985). The purpose and means of higher education is in flux as the growth of credit free programs is exceeding that of traditional credit programs, with corporate education becoming the fastest growing sector in higher education.

Telecommunications provides higher education with the potential to meet many of these challenges. Satellites, video recorders and computerized data bases can eliminate, not only the distance barriers, but the time barriers which have limited access in the past. Just at a time when Pat Cross' dream of 'education for each' is becoming a necessity, the interactivity of computer technology may provide the reality of a truly individualized system (Cross 1976). A diverse student population brings to the classroom a diversity of learning styles, and we can no longer rely on one or two dominate teaching strategies (Weston and Cranton, 1986). Technology can expand, not limit what we do when we teach. Instant access to information, instant global communications means better answers to old problems...it may also mean many new problems for which we must find answers.

As we have seen with the Oklahoma system, the integration of the new telecommunications technologies into systems of higher education requires considerable change in existing structures and methods. Telecommunications requires support and coordination of all levels of higher education: governing boards, legislatures, administration, faculty, students, and staff.

If we accept the argument that telecommunications is important to the future of higher education, we must be prepared to consider the technology and its potential impact upon faculty involvement in the teaching-learning process. Telecommunications means new relationships between teachers and students... it means new relationship between the message and the media. The issue of faculty involvement in the teaching-learning process is far from settled, with some arguing for greater involvement and others arguing just the opposite.

Heinich (1984) makes a very compelling case for reducing faculty involvement. He believes that the governance structures which support faculty involvement are too rigid to accommodate the flexibility which technology requires. He believes that technology poses a threat to the power base of the existing system, and that like the craft guilds of the middle ages, faculty will resist the use of technology. Television teachers often become the minority member of the production team, a role which professors generally find uncomfortable (Smith 1982). Finally, Heinich argues that as our utilization of technology moves from a device in a classroom, to a complex integrated system (as we see with the Oklahoma System) the decision making process will by necessity gravitate from the side of "labor" to the side of "management".

In contrast, if we view telecommunications as an innovation, Lindquist (1978) promotes just the opposite...that is, for an innovation to be successful, it must fit the local scene and it must be perceived as belonging to those whom it effects. While Heinich would place the authority for the teaching-learning process in the board room, Lindquist keeps it in the classroom.

## IMPLEMENTING TELECOMMUNICATIONS: A Case Study

In January 1984, I was hired to plan, implement and direct a media/ telecommunications service for Cameron University, a position which provided an excellent opportunity to test the Lindquist model.

The Milieu

Cameron University is a state supported baccalaureate degree granting institution, with a faculty and staff of 375 serving a student population of over 5000.

A unique student population coupled with dramatic changes in function make Cameron University a particularly relevant case study. Formerly a two year college, Cameron now serves as a four year college, granting baccalaureate degrees and a community college offering associate degrees and credit free programs. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education recently approved another function change, creating graduate programs by 1988. These changes have dramatically altered the university organizational structure, creating an environment of apprehension among faculty which has been exacerbated by a sharp downturn in the state's economy, thus fostering resistance to anything new, especially technology.

Within this context, Cameron serves both a rural and an urban environment. Located in the third largest city in the state, Cameron enrolls a high percentage of part-time evening students. As the only four year college in predominantly rural Southwestern Oklahoma, Cameron also serves many rural commuters. Finally, the presence of the military brings to Cameron an unusually diverse and mobile population. These students come from all parts of the globe, they represent a variety of cultures, and bring to the classroom a diversity of experience, abilities and needs.

In these respects, Cameron is ahead of its time, facing today an environment which many institutions will face within the next ten or twenty years.

Critical Incidents

Funding from a Federal Title III Challenge Grant provided the impetus for this program with money to purchase the equipment for telecommunications

activities, including full broadcast quality video production and editing capability, a televised classroom and a campus-wide local area network.

Year 1. I was hired as director of the program in January of 1984 and an advisory committee was appointed by the the president to determine scope and responsibility. The president approved all recommendations for the scope and responsibility of this committee which included media services, instructional development, and telecommunications. The regents also approved the committee's recommendations to appoint a standing committee to govern and make recommendations. I began to develop facility plans, budgets and equipment specifications, working weekly with the committee on the development of policy and procedures. The facility plan was approved by the regents and a contractor selected in late 1984.

Year 2. Construction on the facility began in January, funded by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the McMahan Foundation. The 1986 budget was approved in tact, providing funding for salaries, supplies and equipment. The committee completed the policy recommendations and all were approved by the president. Construction was completed in August of 1985. Job descriptions were developed and a staff of four were hired. The divisions held elections to replace the original committee. The first evaluation was implemented and analyzed showing that faculty seemed generally pleased with services. However, the response rate was very low and many were unaware of our services. All FY 86-87 budgets were reduced by ten percent due to statewide revenue shortfalls.

Year 3. The new committee began to meet and the first newsletter was published. A subcommittee was formed to develop guidelines for proposals from faculty interested in instructional development projects. The first round of projects were funded including proposals from music, language arts, nursing, communications, the advisement center, information services and the library.

Another subcommittee developed policy for equipment services. The second evaluation was implemented. Faculty still seemed pleased with the service. This time the response rate was greater and the majority of respondents were aware of our services. In the Fall of 1986, the second round of proposals were funded including projects from political science, physics, art, history, information services, continuing education, and home economics. Three subcommittees were formed. The telecommunications subcommittee is developing policy for cable television access, and making recommendations for participation in the Oklahoma State Regents Televised Instruction Network. The faculty development subcommittee is developing a proposal for funding faculty development projects, including workshops, faculty exchanges, and a variety of programs related to teaching-learning activities. This subcommittee will also make recommendations for the university reward system relative to instructional development and telecommunications activities. The public information subcommittee is developing a policy to guide the utilization of media services resources (i.e. television and radio) for university public relations purposes.

Model Applied

The five ingredients of the Lindquist model (p.240) are first, LINKAGE...interpersonal and informational linkage. Second, OPENNESS ...an environment in which people "actively" listen to one another. Third, LEADERSHIP, provided by a linking agent who combines expertise and authority with the ability to collaborate and facilitate. Fourth, OWNERSHIP in which control passes from the hands of one or two into the hands of many. And finally, REWARDS... material and psychic rewards brought about by status and self esteem.

Ownership. Shared ownership implies shared power. Three important means for sharing power are committees participation, the evaluation procedures and the funding process.

A standing faculty committee was formed as soon as possible, charged with the development of policies, scope and responsibility statements and operating procedures for the Academic and Institutional Media Services. This was the name chosen by the committee, since the anachronym AIMS, implied a mission. This committee is responsible for the planning, development and evaluation of all media production services, instructional development, and telecommunications activities including Instructional Television Fixed Service (ITFS), cable television, teleconferencing and satellite services, and serves as the interface for the State Regents Telecommunications network.

The traditional disdain associated with faculty committee assignments can be overcome if that committee is given effective power. Becker (1986) identified four forms of committee power. The first, policy power is the extent to which this group is responsible for developing policy. The AIMS committee developed all policy and procedures and the president approved all recommendations. Next, autonomous power is concerned with to whom does the committee report and who determines membership. All policy recommendations are approved by the president. Otherwise, the AIMS Committee reports to the academic vice president. Membership is determined through faculty elections. Third, hiring power exists when the committee is responsible for developing job descriptions, hiring personnel and making salary recommendations. The AIMS committee approves all job descriptions, selects and guides search committees, and can make personnel and salary recommendations to the president. And finally business power, which is determined by the degree of authority over financial matters. The AIMS committee allocates all resources to departments through a funding process, they make all budget recommendations, and they determine the category

in which dollars are spent, whether for instructional development, telecommunications, media production, administration or equipment. Given these factors, the AIMS committee meets the definition of a powerful committee, and certainly Lindquist's criteria for ownership.

The funding process is another form of ownership. Faculty members submit their ideas in the form of proposals to their peers (the AIMS Committee) for review. The faculty member is the administrator of the grant. The program director (or instructional developer) then works for the faculty member, not the reverse. The proposal itself is a written document outlining the objectives, rationale, methods, timelines and evaluation methods. The proposal then serves as a written contract between the faculty member, the AIMS committee and the program director so that everyone is clear about what is expected (Coldway and Rasmussen, 1984).

Finally, ownership can also come through the evaluation process, both in the form of participating in an evaluation and in developing the evaluation criteria. Each year the AIMS committee makes recommendations concerning the evaluation procedure, determining the questions to be asked and the procedures used to find the answers. The committee then reviews the results and makes recommendations for action. All faculty on campus have an opportunity to participate in the evaluation. First, everyone is given the opportunity to respond to an anonymous evaluation. Second, faculty participating in instructional development or telecommunications projects are interviewed as to the effectiveness of the procedures. Finally, all results are published in the AIMS newsletter, since knowledge of results provides an important means of participation.

Rewards. Lindquist states that an innovation must fit the local scene and a key element of the local scene is the reward system, both the institutional and the individual reward system.

Two types of institutional rewards are first, the criteria by which faculty are recommended for merit, promotion and tenure; and second, the degree to which an institution provides support to overcome the barriers to an innovation.

Though most institutions claim to reward teaching, research and public service, most in fact, emphasize one over the other through the promotion and tenure process. It is very important to determine what an institution "actually" rewards. Once the reward system is identified, the task is to find ways in which telecommunications activities can be supported by the system, with the director of the program becoming an advocate for the faculty.

If an institution rewards research, it is important to find ways for a faculty member to publish about the experience. The paper might first be developed as a technical paper for internal use as many technical papers then turn into publications or presentation. The paper might be a case study, a measure of outcomes, a summary of student attitudes or a naturalistic study.

If an institution rewards teaching, a strong case can be made by documenting the time and activities of the faculty member which contributed to improving instruction. Documentation might include student evaluations and enrollment data, course syllabi, materials produced for the courses, and technical papers which describe methods and outcomes. A letter to the faculty member's department chair is an effective device. And simply having a proposal funded by the AIMS Committee is a form of reward. Participation in telecommunication activities, in and of itself can be an important form of public service, since this activity provides a service to new audiences beyond the campus.

Personal incentives are also an important reward, and there are many incentives which are unique to the individual. These can only be addressed by getting to know the person involved. Personal incentives might include...to become a better teacher, to reach new students, to explore new teaching strategies, because its a challenge, to make new professional contacts, to add to the body of knowledge, to establish a new network of resources. Personal incentives explain why individuals do something often in spite of the institutional reward system.

It is also important to consider the rewards for committee service. Here, the concept of committee power relates to the reward system since it would seem likely that the greater the committee power, the greater the prestige associated with membership, a notion consistent with both institutional and individual rewards.

Another type of reward is related to the alleviation of barriers associated with an innovation. The Oklahoma survey shows that telecommunications brings considerable barriers. The degree to which these barriers can be overcome depends largely upon the nature of the support staff provided. Telecommunications activities rely upon the integration of a series of sophisticated technologies. Faculty should not be bothered with the "detail" which accompanies telecommunications; that is, coordination of paper work, delivery of course materials, setting up equipment, scheduling sites. Technological difficulties require immediate response...unfortunately immediate response translates into dollars, and as we have seen with the Oklahoma System, that funding commitment may not be there. Distance learning requires committed representatives at the remote sites to provide a variety of student services. A criticism of the Oklahoma system is that the receiving sites have no incentives for participation, therefore rooms are often locked, exams are not monitored and course materials are lost or delayed. Finally, faculty need someone to provide

a link between learning theory, telecommunications and practice. What are the attributes of the medium utilized which can contribute to optimal learning...what are effective teaching strategies and how can the system be used to support these ...what techniques can faculty utilize to compensate for the inability to see or meet with the student...how do the various media impact learning styles.

Leadership. Lindquist describes leadership as "initiating, guiding, involving and influential" (p. 240). Two key potential leaders are the committee chair and the program director. The program director will often serve as "initiator" since this individual has more knowledge of the potentials and limits of the technology. The program director can also be "influential" if perceived a knowledgeable and active in the field. Promoting "involvement" often requires the program director to commit considerable time and resources to provide the committee with the information and research required to make informed decisions. The committee chair can also provide "influence" especially if perceived as a faculty advocate and "in touch" with the campus political climate. The chair serves an important "involvement" function since this individual is the link between the program and the faculty. Finally the committee chair provides a "guiding" function, by setting goals, establishing agendas and timelines, making subcommittees assignments, and keeping all groups on task.

Openness. Lindquist emphasizes the "active" in active openness to underline the need for an environment which supports an honest and nonthreatening exchange of ideas. The committee process is one means for providing active openness. Openness in the committee process can be related again to the nature of the committee power. Because the AIMS committee is responsible for budgets, needs assessments and evaluations, all AIMS documents are open to inspection and most

documents are reviewed by the committee prior to distribution. A second feature supporting openness is the newsletter. Not only is the newsletter informative, it is also a forum for comment from faculty since they are encouraged to submit short articles. The committee chair often uses the newsletter to report on committee activities. Third, weekly meetings between the AIMS chair and program director support the concept of openness, since this meeting involves a discussion of issues, strategies and possible committee agendas. Finally, the evaluation process supports openness since the methods utilized are determined by the faculty and the results are published in the newsletter.

Linkage. Lindquist describes linkage as exposure to outside practitioners and experts, continuous sharing of thinking and background information, in depth explorations of a subject and a committed advocacy.

The committee process itself promotes linkage since all meetings involve a sharing of ideas. Since each academic division has a representative on the AIMS committee, these individuals gain insight into the needs and problems of other departments, with a caveat...they begin to view these from a broader university-wide perspective. The funding process provides the AIMS members with ideas for teaching since the proposals describe the methods and ideas of others. Finally, the high level of ownership and the high degree of power exercised by the committee has provided the foundation for a committed advocacy for the program.

The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education has also served as a linking agent through the Kellogg Grant and funding for a series of leadership development conferences for faculty and administrators. Many of our faculty have participated in these activities along with faculty from other institutions. These conferences have covered a range of topics which are either

directly or indirectly related to telecommunications. Not only have faculty heard from nationally recognized experts, but they have had the chance to interact with faculty from other campuses and other subject areas.

Finally, a subcommittee of the AIMS committee has been charged with the development of a plan to continue the linkage function. Among the issues being considered are a variety of teaching-learning activities including faculty exchanges, instructional improvement programs, workshops, teaching fairs and teaching-learning conferences.

Effectiveness.

Since the AIMS program is in its fourth year, the evaluation process has provided data which can be utilized as an assessment of effectiveness. However, the program should be assessed within the next three to five years through an outside evaluation process.

Quantitative Data. Faculty responses on the annual evaluation gave AIMS an effectiveness rating of 9.06 on a scale of one to ten with ten high. Though many individuals originally believed that no one would utilize AIMS, last year one hundred percent of the twenty-one departments and over one-third of the faculty have utilized some aspect of AIMS services. Faculty from seven departments participated in instructional development projects during the 85-86 school year. In the 86-87 school year faculty from seven additional departments have submitted requests for these projects. This response is significant since enrollments have increased by twelve percent while funding has declined by ten percent, creating additional pressure upon faculty work loads.

Qualitative Data. The AIMS committee has demonstrated a very high level of commitment, meeting weekly since early 1984. The committee members are often required to work between meetings. When AIMS committee elections were held early last year, three of the seven divisions actually had runoff elections. Although the university will continue to experience funding cuts, faculty have

generally been supportive of the resources committed to AIMS. Given the severe financial condition of the state, it is significant to note that there have been no efforts from any group on campus to reduce the funding or impact of AIMS. The AIMS telecommunication subcommittee is in the process of preparing recommendations to increase AIMS operating funds for cable television activities. Finally, the committee members are beginning to feel increasingly comfortable with technology as they have learned much through the committee work...often referring to the program as "our" program. Instructional development and telecommunications are not so threatening when they are understood.

However, the Lindquist model has several drawbacks. The committee process is very cumbersome and time consuming for all involved, requiring a considerable investment of time by both the program administrator and committee chair in preparation for the weekly committee meetings. The process may also place the program administrator in a tenable position. Since the Lindquist model places so much power with the committee, the power of the program administrator tends to be a consultive power based in knowledge and expertise rather than an administrative power based in authority, requiring an environment of consensus and mutual trust. Finally, the process is slow and deliberative as many issues remain on hold for long periods.

In summary, this case study supports the application of the Lindquist model in the implementation of telecommunications programs in higher education. Application of the model requires ownership through committee participation, evaluation procedures and the proposal process; rewards through an analysis of institutional and individual incentives and a sensitivity and responsiveness to barriers; leadership by the program administrator and committee chair; openness

based in the power of the committee, the newsletter and the evaluation procedures; and finally linkage through interaction among the committee members, proposal authors and interinstitutional exchanges.

Just as the student of the communications era brings to higher education many challenges, the new telecommunications technologies provide new opportunities to meet these challenges. Certainly telecommunications can extend the classroom, as exemplified by the Talkback Television System. However, the new telecommunications network providing for a totally integrated voice data and video network will allow higher education to reconceptualize the classroom. We have an opportunity, but it is an opportunity with risks. One risk is that we will not do anything...that we will fail to take advantage of what we have and simply continue as we have in the past. The second risk is that we will misuse our technology by allowing the responsibility for the teaching-learning process to shift from the classroom to the board room.

By creating an environment of shared leadership and shared ownership, the Lindquist model offers a realistic, workable method for the implementation of telecommunications in higher education, providing a system by which we can reduce the risks and maximize the opportunities of our technology.

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